SOUTHERN INDIA AND CHINA

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MADRAS

MADRAS UNIVERSITY, ENDOWMENT LECTURE

tv: 308

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(Sir Subrahmanya Ayyar Foundation)

1945

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The Early Routes

The ancient routes taken by the Indians to China and by the Chinese to India are still a matter of speculation. Still more mysterious is the fixing up of the first contact of the Chinese and the Indians. Some good work has been done about the history of the contact between India and China from early times (see, for example, Dr. P. C. Bagchi's *India and China*, Calcutta, 1945). The French scholars, to mention only two, P. Pelliot and E. Chavannes have done much to unravel the Sino-Indian cultural contact. Collating the material supplied by these scholars who have done admirable research in this direction, we have to conclude that there were both land routes and sea routes to China. Among the overland routes one was the Central Asian route through which Indian Buddhist missionaries had travelled to the land of China. According to one tradition the Buddhist missionaries were seen at the Chinese capital about 217 B. C. Another land route lay through Assam and Burma and this led to the south-west part of China. This is said to have been popular about the second century before Christ. Yet another route was opened according to the Sinologists in the second quarter of the seventh century A.D., and this was through Tibet. These various routes were used largely by the missionaries and traders of North India. Therefore they do not interest us for the present.

What is of importance to a study of the contact of Southern India and China is the route overseas. The South Indian contact with China was chiefly through the sea. This was made easy and possible because of the colonisation of the Far East by the Indians from some centuries before the Christian Era. It is probable that the first contact was much earlier than we seem to imagine. Funan, Campā, Śrī Vijaya were some of the kingdoms established in the Far East not by the might of the sword but by the magic of religion and commerce. The Chinese historians themselves aver that it was one South Indian Brahman, Kauṇḍinya by name, that first colonised Funan and this happened in the first century

of the Christian Era. We have no tangible evidence for any movements prior to this event, though one can imagine that such a movement was possible. Parts of Cambodia and Siam were included in the kingdom of Funan. In the next century the Indians were more enterprising and they occupied the land of Campā which soon shot into an important kingdom of the Far East. It may be pointed out that the northern limits of the kingdom of Campā touched the frontier of the Chinese empire of which Tonkin was a province. Tonkin was one of the flourishing ports of ancient China. The sea route from India to China generally ended with Tonkin. Tonkin continued to maintain its importance for several centuries. But at the commencement of the seventh century, with the rise of Canton as the principal port of China, Tonkin ceased to be an active port of call for vessels from India and other places. What is of further importance to the subject on hand is that our contact and colonisation of Cambodia and Campā dragged us on to China, because both Cambodia and Campā were in direct touch with China politically and commercially. This fact made it possible for the South Indian colonisers to extend their trade and religious activities to the various parts of the Chinese empire.

It may also be mentioned in this connection that Yavadvīpa (modern Java) and Śrī Vijaya (the territory covering the east coast of Sumatra) were other kindoms of Indian colonisation. The Indian people who went to China had necessarily to halt at them and then continue their journey. Students of Indian History know that the Chinese traveller Fa Hien, who visited India at the commencement of the fifth century A.D., sailed back to his country from India through Java. More than a century later, another Chinese pilgrim by name Yi-tsing on his way to India halted at Śrī Vijaya for about six months and then continued his journey. This happened in the second half of the seventh century A.D. These two instances are enough to prove the importance of Java and Sumatra in the early centuries of the Christian Era. It was about Yi-tsing's time the hold which China had over Central Asia was lost. This particular circumstance made the sea route to China all the more important. Vessels from the ports on the west coast and the east coast of Indian Peninsula bound to China often took the sea route. On the west coast the principal ports were Quilon, Monte de Ely, and Calicut.

On the side of the Bay of Bengal, among other ports, Puhar or Kāveripaṭṭanam, at the mouth of the river Kaveri near the present Mayavaram in Tanjore District was an active trade centre. Equally active was Tamluk at the Ganges, so far as the Far East was concerned. Among port of disembarkation Siṁhapura (the modern Singapore) should be mentioned. According to Ibn Khurdadhbeg, Bullin (also Baliq) was an important station connecting the east and west coasts of the Indian Peninsula. Travellers to China via Ceylon (Sarandib) used Bullin as the starting station. Dr. Barnett identified Bullin with Baliapatam in Chirakkal Taluq, Malabar District. The vessels bound for China halted at a number of islands in the Indies until they reached Campā. From there Luqin, the first station in China, was reached (quoted in S. M. H. Nainar's *Arab Geographers*, pp 30-31). While Indian vessels, and ships from other countries, were busily engaged in trade and commerce with China exporting their own goods and importing Chinese goods to their countries, it is said that China owned no ships of her own and entirely depended on foreign vessels for transport. China began to have ships of her own centuries after her contact with India. These were huge vessels known by the name Junks. Marco Polo describes them as mountains sailing on the sea.

In the early centuries of the Christian Era there was brisk international trade carried on in the south seas. The southern dynasties at Nanking were in active communication with Ceylon, South India, Indo-China and other countries. Up to the time of Mahomet the entire ocean trade with the Far East and China was the monopoly of India. Arabs who were known to the Chinese for the first time in 628 A.D. and who navigated the Indian ocean adventurously established factories not only on the Malabar coast but also at Canton and other Chinese ports. The reports of the Arab merchant Suleiman and of the Arab geographer Abu Seid of the 9th and 10th centuries respectively testify to a lively international traffic in the Indian Ocean. Chinese accounts of the period speak of foreign ships at Canton with capacity of 1000 *bharams* (each *bharam* equal to a quarter of a ton.) Surely *Bharam* is a Tamil word and suggests South Indian vessels prominently noticed in Canton (E. H. Parker, *China*, Ch. III).

On the name China

China is known in Indian literature as Cīna. The *Mahābhārata*

uses this term in its reference to China. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭalya (fourth century B. C.) mentions *Cīnabhūmi* and *Cīnapaṭṭa*. It is generally taken for granted that the name China is derived from name of the Ts'in dynasty (255-106 B. C.). According to the Chinese annals, which have been accepted as portraying exact chronology, the Ts'in dynasty began to rule only from 247 B. C. If China is derived from Ts'in as the French Sinologist P. Pelliot would have it, then the reference in the *Arthaśāstra* and even the epic may refer to another country. I agree with the late Jayaswal that the term Cīna in early Indian literature may be a reference to Shina, of the Gilgit tribe, also famous for silk manufacture in those days.

According to the Tondamandala Pattayam, a comparatively modern work, the Chinese are classed together with the Tirayar tribes who settled in Tondaimandalam, which is the present Coromandel coast. By the expression Tirayar, we are to understand that they were a sea-faring people engaged in overseas trade. Though we cannot attach much importance to the testimony of Tondamandala Pattayam, still the mention of Chinese Tirayar is an evidence of the contact of South India with China. This is further corroborated by a Chinese writer, Pan Kou who flourished in the first century A.D. He says in his *Ts'ien han shu* that it takes a year by boat from the coast of Indo-China to reach Houang-tche which has been identified with good reason with Kanchi by Ferrand. Speaking of the kingdom of Kanchi, it is said that the land was extensive, populous and full of strange products. It is further stated that from the time of Emperor Wou (140-86 B. C.) trade relations with this kingdom were pretty frequent. It is reasonable therefore, to conclude with Dr. B. Laufer that India had contacts with China, much earlier than the Ts'in dynasty (K. A. N. Sastri's *Foreign notices of South India*, pp, 44-5).

Trade Relations

We have already noticed on the authority of Pan Kou that in the second century B. C., if not earlier, there was intercourse between Southern India and China. It was purely commercial. The Chinese traders visited Kanchi (Conjeevaram) and with the help of the local men they went by sea and bought pearls, glass, rare stones, and other products not available in China and in exchange they supplied gold and silks. It has been stated that large pearls measured up to seven inches. Perhaps this is an exaggeration. The same Chinese

authority avers that the Chinese were so anxious to procure products of Southern India and of the Indian Ocean that a special Chinese mission was sent out to explore the entire Indian Ocean.

For the next five centuries we have no documentary evidence as to the trade relations. But as Parker says, 'there is every reason to believe that a brisk trade went without interruption as before.' At least the southern dynasties continued to keep up their traffic with Ceylon, South India and Indo-China. Ma-Twan-Lin, a Chinese historian depicts a picture of Southern India in the second half of the sixth century. Apart from the social life of the people which is in itself interesting, there is mention of South India's brisk trade not only with China and the Far East but also with Rome and other western countries. Coral necklaces, conches, and perhaps pearls were largely in demand. Teeth possibly of elephants and rhinoceroses and shells were other commodities. There were account books supplying information about commercial transactions. But it is said that they generally dispensed with them. Mostly transactions were conducted by the system of barter (J.A.S.B., VI, pp. 66-7).

Later in the Pallava period, there were trade relations. As many as twenty Chinese coins, all of copper with different weights ranging from 1.86 grammes to 7.640 have been discovered in 1942 at Vikraman village, Pattukottai taluq, Tanjore district. Among them three coins belong to the T'ang period and are of the K'aiyuan period (713-742). This is a proof of the continuity of commercial relations (P. C. Bagchi, *Sino-Indian Studies*, Vol. I, pp. 60-63). The Chinese emperors were fascinated by the products of Southern India which came off and on as presents and tributes. So we hear of a Chinese priest Kien-Tchen by name (742-54) describing Canton. In this town there were peoples of different countries—Persians, Malays, Ceylonese, Arabs etc., engaged in active commerce. Among them were merchants from India also. "They were all laden with incense, herbs, jewels and other precious products. The merchandise was piled up in heaps. These ships were 60 to 70 feet deep." (J. Takakusu in B.E.F.F.O., 28-29, p. 466).

The overseas trade of the great Cholas like Rājarāja and Rājendra was not only with countries of the Far East but also with China. Though we have no tangible evidence as to the number of times and the duration of each mercantile venture undertaken during the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, still there is no doubt that the old trade

traditions were maintained in tact, and the curios of both countries were being exchanged by barter. Among the Tanjore coins recently discovered there are seventeen Chinese coins which represent practically the entire Song period. (960-1279) (See Bagchi, *Sino-Indian Studies*, vol. I, pp. 60-63). Again, when Chau-Ju-Kua wrote his celebrated book the *Chu fan che* about the commencement of the 13th century, it is seen that the Chinese sailors were fully acquainted with the Chola dominions (Ibid.) Luckily again for us we have Wassaf's evidence that "Ma'bar extends in length from Kulam (Quilon) to Nilawar (Nellore), nearly three hundred parasangs along the sea-cost,......The curiosities of Chin and Machin, and the beautiful products of Hind and Sind, laden on large ships (which they call junks), sailing like mountains with the wings of the winds on the surface of the water, are always arriving here." It is interesting to note that Wassaf calls Ma'bar the Key of Hind (Elliot and Dowson, III, p. 32). Marco Polo adds that this region is noted for pearl fishery.

It is evident that Marco Polo visited Tanjore and Kāveripaṭṭanam, the Fattan of Muhammadan writers.* This foreign observer tells us of the trade of the ports of the Coromandel with China. That the Tanjore ports were frequented by the Chinese Junks and traders in the 13th century is corroborated by a pagoda of uncemented brickwork about a mile to the north-west of Negapatam known as the Chinese pagoda. The structure of the building has no resemblance to the Chinese structure of architecture. It is primarily Indian in style. There is a tradition that it was erected in honour of some distinguished Chinese visitors. The view that it was a tower of the Jaina faith may be negatived by the fact that Negapatam was known all along as a seat of Buddhist faith. No other clue exists to determine the exact nature of this monument. There are no inscriptions or even a sculpture of value to the historian.

The tradition that this monument was a result of the presence of the Chinese commercial magnates in the city is confirmed by the statements of Baldaeus (1672) and Valentyn (1726). This tradition persisted upto the eighteenth century. Among the coins found in several places like Mahabalipuram on this coast were also a hoard of Chinese coins (J.R.A.S. 1. p. 352 n. and p. 353). On the basis of these

* According to Dr. S. M. H. Nainar, Fattan may stand for Kilakkarai in the Ramnad District.

evidences, we may not be far from the right if we credit this tradition with some trustworthiness. To make a long story short, this ancient edifice became so dilapidated that it was pulled down completely in 1859 (See Marco Polo, Notes and addenda by Henry Cordier, 1920, pp. 113-4). We have also some details of the trade relations with different places in Southern India at the time of Marco Polo. One of them is the city of Cail (Kayal), one of the ancient capitals of the Pandyas, known to the Greek merchants by name Korkai or Kolkhoi. That it was in active intercourse with China is borne out from what Dr. Caldwell has to say on the subject. "The whole plain is covered with broken tiles and remnants of pottery, chiefly of China manufacture.........The people of the place have forgotten the existence of any trade between Kayal and China, though the Chinapottery that lies all about testifies to its existence at some former period." Perhaps its trade with China declined in course of time while it retained until recent times its contact with Arabia and Persia.

Quilon continued to maintain its age-long relations, both diplomatic and commercial. This is testified to us by Marco Polo and also Ibn Battuta (1333-45 A.D.). The latter visited a number of ports of Malabar including Quilon and Calicut. Calicut is described by Ibn Battuta (H.A.R. Gibb, pp. 234-9) as one of the largest harbours in the world, frequented for trade among others by the people of China. Spring was the proper season for voyage to China. According to him all communications to this country were disposed of in Chinese vessels which were of three classes, the biggest called Junk, the medium Zus and the small Kakam. Hili was another port of Malabar with which China had trade relations. The ships leaving Calicut were to touch Quilon. Ibn Battuta calls this one of the finest cities of Malabar with great bazaars and rich merchants. Among them there were a good number of Chinese. Quilon was located in the midst of the pepper country. Though pepper and other spices were continuously in demand from Europe and China, for several centuries together, there was a gradual decline in that trade by the fourteenth century, especially from China.

Hili, a port of Malabar has been already mentioned. Marco Polo speaks of the kingdom of Eli. It is said to be a well built city situated on a large estuary accessible by great ships. Both Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta state that the Chinese vessels frequented this port. This is probably Monte de Ely, the Yelimala

of Malabar (*Marco Polo* ed. by Yule, III Ch. XXIV). Thus in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, these three ports of Malabar were in frequent touch with China. The vessels of China came to these places, halted for winter, purchased large quantities of goods and commodities which were rare in China and returned just about the commencement of the Spring season. During the winter these vessels generally lay at anchor in Fandaraina, a place about sixteen miles north of Calicut.

Fei Hsin 1436 A.D., gives a list of articles in which trade was carried on. These are gold, silver, coloured satins, blue and white porcelain, beads, musk, quick-silver and camphor. Fifteen years later Ma Huan, a Muhammadan Chinaman who was attached as Interpreter to the suite of Cheng Ho, visited Southern India and other places in the Eastern seas. He informs us that when a ship arrives from China at Calicut, the king's overseer and a Chitti (modern Chetty) go on board and make an invoice of the goods. A day is generally fixed for estimating the value of the cargo. On that day the silk goods are first inspected and valued. As soon as this is over, those present join hands when the broker says 'the price of your goods is now fixed, and cannot in any way be altered'. Then comes the Weinaki broker who is Chetty Weinaki. He fixes the price for pearls and precious stones. In this way the exchange is effected. All reckoning were made without an abacus but with the aid of toes and fingers and still indisputably correct (J.R.A.S. 1896) pp. 345-8: T'oung Pao, XVI, pp. 455-60). It may be mentioned in passing that it was Chettys who conducted trading transactions on behalf of the king ashore and afloat.

This first rate trade of China with Malabar seems to have come to an end by the fifteenth century. The reasons are not definitely known. But there is an allusion to this in the information forwarded by Joseph of Cranganore in the *Novus Orbis* (ed. of 1555, p. 208 quoted by Yule). Here the Chinese are called people of Cathay, one of the old names of China. It is said that the king of Calicut treated them badly so that they had to quit the country. But shortly after they returned in large numbers and after inflicting a great slaughter on the people of Calicut, left the place for ever. After several centuries of close contact, and settlements, it would not have been possible for China to withdraw root and branch from Malabar. In fact Abdur Razzak states that generally

the seafaring population of Calicut were nicknamed Chinibachagan 'China boys' (*India in XV century*, p. 19). Another authority tells us that several descendants of the old Chinese settlers who made Calicut their home did not feel called upon to leave Indian shores for the distant China. And in the course of a hundred years they became gradually extinct. But 'their sumptuous idol temples' remained to mark their early settlements. This tradition is narrated to us in Gaspor Correa's account of Voyages of Da Gama. But how far it is based on facts cannot be determined with satisfaction. But there is a statement in a paper in the famous collection of the Mackenzie Mss. that down to time of Colonel Mackenzie there was a tribe in Calicut whose ancestors were believed to have been Chinese (Taylor's *Catalogue*, III, pp. 664-5). If we take these different statements culled out from independent sources into consideration, there is reason to believe that the Chinese connection was in vogue in some form or other in Malabar. If we can believe the record of P. Paolino, to the effect that Chinese versels frequented the ports of Travancore for pepper in the last century, then it is legitimate to suppose of some revival of Chinese trade in the west coast of Peninsular India. (*Marco Polo*, ed. by Yule).

It may be true that China's active trade with Malabar ceased by the end of the fifteenth century. This did not mean that China withdrew all her trade relations from Southern India. From another statement in *Novus Orbis*, we are told that China turned her activities again to the Coromandel Coast. It is stated that 'after that they began to frequent Mailapetam, a city subject to the king of Narsingha, a region towards the east......and there they now drive their trade.' This is further corroborated from another quarter (*Mendoza*, Parker's Translation p. 71). All this shows that there was busy trade between China and the Vijayanagar kingdom. (See Yule, *op. cit.* II, pp. 391-92).

With the arrival of Europeans like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English and later on of Russia and the United States, trade developments in China took entirely a new turn and this explains the comparative decline of her trade with India and specially Southern India. But we conclude this section with the remarks of E. H. Parker who says: "With one or two exceptions the beaten tracks are exactly the same now as they were 2000 years ago, both by land and by sea. The marts, with similar rare exceptions, are either the

old marts, or are near them, or have a special traceable reason for their modified existence". (p. 85).

Diplomatic Relations

From the very commencement of the Christian era, (1-6 A.D.) we have the unquestionable evidence of Pan Kou to show that the envoys of Wang Mang came to Kanchi with costly presents to the king of the land and told the latter that it was the desire of Wang Mang that he should send in return an embassy to China with a live rhinoceros as tribute. Thus we see even from the initial years of the Christian era that there were political embassies from and to China. At this period of South Indian history it may be remembered that the kingdom of Kanchi was a part of the great Chola country.

The exchange of embassies and ambassadors have been going on through the early centuries between the Chinese kings and the Indian monarchs. This is evident from the Chinese accounts of India (*Ind. Ant.* IX, p. 14 ff.) However, we have no tangible evidence as to the nature of the embassies and other details connected for the first four centuries. But it is certain that in the time of Seuen-Woo of the dynasty of the later Wei (A.D. 500-516), South India sent an ambassador to China. Even here we are not in a position to relate which part of South India sent this envoy. All that can be gathered from the extant Chinese accounts is that a certain envoy called on the Chinese king and offered as presents some fine horses. This ambassador seems to have impressed the Chinese king of the fact that his kingdom was rich in wild animals like lions, leopards, panthers and rhinoceroses. Special mention is also made of a variety of yellowish red pearls in South India, which, if divided disperse like the wings of the cricket and if heaped up become compact like strongly woven threads of silk. There were again diamonds, which if purified a hundred times in the fire could cut jasper. Mention is also made of abundant odorous plants and fine muslins embroidered with gold and silver. Honey, pepper and ginger are other products in the list of articles given by the envoy. Judging from the variety of products referred to in this account, one may infer that it was the kingdom of Malabar that sent this ambassador to the Chinese court.

A Chinese Legation at Quilon :—There are two statements among Arab writers which go to show that there was a legation of China

in Quilon or *vice versa*. Yāqūt states that 'the inhabitants (of Quilon) choose a king for China when their own king dies'. On the other hand, Qazwīnī says that 'when their king dies the people of the place choose another from China'. (Elliot, I, p. 95) K. P. P. Menon on the authority of Elliot's translation expresses the view in his *History of Kerala* (I, p. 277) that the mention of a choice of a king from China to succeed the deceased incumbent points to a Chinese factory or settlement in Quilon, governed by its own chiefs under the direction of the Chinese Home Government. Considering the volume of trade between South India and China at the time, it is just possible that there was an independent settlement of the Chinese at the important trading centre like Quilon. But if Yāqūt's version were to be believed, then it was the other way about. The people of Quilon had founded a settlement in China, and when their nominee died, it was usual to send his successor from Quilon. Both are possible. Though we cannot definitely say whether there was a Chinese settlement in South India or a South Indian settlement in China, still the fact is that there were such settlements which were managed by a Deputy of the Government. (Dr. Nainar, *op. cit.* p. 46).

The next account of diplomatic relations between South India and China was during the time of the Pallavas of Kanchi. Chinese accounts which are our primary authority on this diplomatic relation differ from one another in detail. According to Ma Twan-Lin, it was about 667 A.D. that the five kingdoms of India sent ambassadors to the court of the Chinese emperor. As per another account it was in the year 692 that the kings of Eastern, Western, Southern, Northern and Central India came to render homage at the court of China. Still another account furnishes us with the information of an embassy from South India in the year 710 in the reign of the emperor Joei-Tsong. This means that the Chinese language has become popular in India. That it was one of the eighteen languages known and spoken in South India is seen from an informing passage in the *Jivakacintamani*, a Tamil classic of the eighth century A.D. (See stanza 93). The names of these eighteen languages are found in the commentary of Mayilai Nathar to Nannul.

There are two important Chinese literary records by name *Kieu T'ang Shu*, and *Ts'o fu Yuan Kuei*. The latter is a cyclopædia of about 1013 A.D. which throws further light on the diplomatic negotiations of a certain Pallava monarch who is named She-li

Na Lo-Seng-Kia, (Śrī Narasiṁha) and also Sheli-Na-Lo-Seng-Kia Pao-To-Pa-Mo (Śrī Narasiṁha Potavarman). The Chinese accounts aver that this Narasiṁha of Kanchi wanted to punish the Arabs and the Tibetans and his other enemies. Before he actually declared war, he consulted the Chinese emperor who blessed him in his endeavour. It is said that the emperor was so much pleased with the action of Narasiṁha's army and even named it as 'the army that cherished virtue.' If this were a fact—there is no reason to disbelieve it—it shows how intimate and friendly were the relations between China and South India from a political point of view. The Chinese emperor of the time was so powerful and yet so friendly to the king of Kanchi, that the latter often consulted him before taking a decision. In his turn the emperor of China was quite helpful in rendering him the needed assistance.

This was the age when the Arabs had settled in South India in large numbers for purposes of trade. They could have quarrelled with the king who probably interfered with some of their rights and privileges. This was also the period of Tibetan supremacy. At this time, according to the history of Tibet, the Tibetans got a firm control over the whole of Bengal and weilded their power for nearly two hundred years, when the Bay of Bengal was virtually named the Sea of Tibet. It is but natural that this newly acquired right on the part of Tibet over the Bay of Bengal incensed a good deal the Pallava king of Kanchi and provoked him to open hostilities with the Tibetans on the one hand and the Arabs on the other.

Such diplomatic relations were conducted largely and successfully by sending qualified and able ambassadors. These went to the court of China and stayed there as state guests, enjoying the full confidence and splendid hospitality of the emperor. That the ambassador of South India was treated generously and courteously as befitted his status is seen from the Chinese accounts. It is said that a decree was promulgated that this South Indian ambassador should be looked after with the greatest care till his departure. His personal comforts and needs should be attended to, so that on his return he would feel that he had been honourably treated. It was a custom prevalent in those days to present the ambassador with royal honours when he was about to return, In the case of this ambassador, we are told that the Chinese emperor was pleased to present him with a robe of flowered silk, a gold girdle, a purse

containing an emblem in the form of a fish, and the seven objects. We are not in a position to say what these seven objects were. Such a kindly treatment of an envoy is worthy of the Chinese emperor.

A few months after, the Chinese accounts continue, the emperor of China was so pleased with his friend and ally in South India, the great Narasiṁha Potavarman that he cherished the desire of conferring on him a title of distinction and rank. With this object in view, the Chinese emperor sent an ambassador from China to Kanchi as his representative to confer the title of 'King of the Kingdom of South India' on Narasiṁha Potavarman. This was a recognition coming as it did from a far-off emperor. In between, the Chinese texts inform us that the Pallava king Narasiṁha wanted to exhibit his heart-felt gratitude to the Chinese emperor in a tangible manner. He erected a magnificient temple in honour of China. He wrote to the emperor that he would be pleased if he named this temple and sent an epigraph to that effect. The emperor responded to the wish of the Pallava monarch and named it 'that causes return to virtue' (Koei-hoa-se). A tablet with this inscription was sent to Narasiṁha who ordered it to be placed in front of that temple.

Collating all these pieces of information culled from different Chinese texts, we are led to conclude that the relation between the Pallavas and the Chinese court were very cordial both in the latter half of the seventh century and the first half of the eighth century A.D. They were more than allies in their relations. Each respected the other. In this series of embassies of 667, 692, 710 and 720 one of the Pallava monarchs is mentioned by name and he is Narasiṁha Potavarman. He is said to have flourished about 720 A.D. If we turn to the pages of Pallava history we find one Narasiṁhavarman II alias Rājasiṁha ruling circa 680-700 A.D. He was an enthusiastic builder of temples. Among others the Kailāśanātha temple at Kanchi and the Shore temple at Mahabalipuram are attributed to him. He was also a great patron of literature. He was succeeded by Parameśvaravarman II who reigned only for ten years 700-710 A.D. Immediately after this there was some dynastic revolution and the throne passed on to Nandivarman II. Some inscriptions mention one Hiraṇyavarman. According to the late Krishna Sastri this Hiraṇyavarman was the son of Nandivarman II, also named Dantivarman. According to this calculation the

Pallava king referred to in the Chinese accounts as ruling in 720 A.D. should be Nandivarman II Pallavamalla who seems to have enjoyed a long reign of 65 years from 710-775 A.D. That this king was also known by the other name Nandipotavarman is borne out by the Kendur plates of Vikramāditya II (733-46) who invaded Kanchi then ruled by Nandipotavarman. From this it appears that the Pallava monarch referred to in the Chinese texts should be Nandivarman II Pallavamalla.

The next landmark is reached in the epoch of the Cholas. The Chinese annals especially *Chau Ju-Kua* record three embassies sent during different periods by the Chola monarchs. One was during the reign of Rājarāja I in the year 1015. Though Rājarāja's reign ended in 1014 it is reasonable to accept that the embassy started when the king was alive and reached China in 1015. The delay is explained as the route lay through the Malay region. The next embassy was sent by Rājendra I and this was in the year 1033 A.D. The most notable embassy was during the period of Kulottuṅga Chola Deva or Kulottuṅga I in 1077 A.D. A detailed account of this embassy is furnished and if closely examined all these embassies of the Chola period were more in the nature of trade ventures than of political or diplomatic relations. The Chinese authorities themselves state that China received an embassy from the Chola dominion for the first time. Neither trade relations nor cultural contacts existed before, between China and the Chola kingdom proper. The embassy sent out by Kulottuṅga consisted of as many as seventytwo men. They carried with them as tributes glass, camphor, brocades, rhinoceros' horns, ivory, incense, rose-water, putchuck, borax, cloves etc. In return the embassy received 81,800 strings of copper cash, each to the value of a dollar. One important point to be noted is about the reception these embassies had at the hands of the Chinese. They were given a lower status, at least they were not treated as first class envoys. They were ordered to wait at the palace gate and entertained at a banquet by the associates in the College of Court Annalists. This may be due to the fact that the Chola mission came to the notice of the Chinese emperor for the first time, and the latter ignorant of the wealth and power of the newly risen Cholas might not have attached to them much value and importance. Probably it may be that the embassy was more of the nature of a trade embassy which did not deserve the same treatment as a diplomatic embassy.

Or again, it might have been due to a misrepresentation of facts by the ambassadors of Śrī Vijaya in China.

The Chinese Annals show that some time the Chola power was subordinate to Śrī Vijaya. The envoys of Śrī Vijaya made out to the President of the Council of Rites in China that their king was the sovereign of a great kingdom including that of the Cholas during the years 1068-77. This might have lent the impression that the Cholas were occupying a subordinate position. These causes might have contributed to the rather indifferent treatment meted out to the Chola embassy. The result was that Śrī Vijaya took a rank higher than the Cholas in the political estimate of the Chinese. This continued as a precedent even in 1106 when the envoys from Śrī Vijaya were accorded better treatment and status than the Chola envoys. But actually the Chola kingdom was never subordinate to Śrī Vijaya. On the other hand the conquest and rule of the Cholas over Śrī Vijaya is incontrovertible (See K. A. N. Sastri's *Cholas*, II, pp. 25-6).

The next set of embassies from and to China was in the second half of the 13th century. Though the Sung Dynasty was ruling in China from 960 to 1260, still from 1127 the Sung lost all China north of the Yang-tse. Practically for three hundred years the Peking plain was in Tartar hands. At the commencement of the thirteenth century the Mongols swept over all China and beyond, and carried their arms upto western Europe. In the south, Kublai Khan the Great Mongol, overran Yun Nan and even Burma, Annam and the Shan States between them. He became the Chinese emperor and ruled over a vaster empire than any other Chinese sovereign in earlier times. The early European traveller Marco Polo visited his court. He sent envoys to and received embassies from several countries. Among these figure prominently Ma'bar which meant to him almost all south Indian kingdoms and at least the Coromandel region. At this time in South India the Pāṇḍyan kingdom had been re-established, the Cholas being on the wane. The Pāṇḍyan king with whom Kublai Khan had frequent contacts, commercial and otherwise, was the Great Kulaśekhara Pāṇḍya.

Marco Polo visited the Pāṇḍyan kingdom towards the close of the thirteenth century and Chinese sources agree in the statement that at that time, *i.e.*, about 1280 A.D. the province of Ma'bar was ruled by five royal brothers. This is to some extent supported by Wassaf, the Muhammadan historian. It is true that the brothers

ruled as independent princes in different parts of South India. But at the same time the fact remains that Māravarman Kulaśekhara, as he is called, was the sovereign monarch, superior to other contemporary princes. Says Wassaf, 'Kales Dewar, the ruler of Ma'bar enjoyed a highly prosperous life, extending to forty and odd years' (Elliot & Dowson, III, p. 52) Taking all these things into consideration, it is to be inferred that other princes enjoyed the status of viceroys in their respective territorial units. There is ample evidence to prove that he captured Kollam (Quilon) and even Malainadu. Kulaśekhara's accession may be roughly dated 1268 A.D., and if we believe Wassaf's testimony, he reigned upto 1308 and beyond.

This historical background will help us in examining the numerous embassies between China and India from 1279 to 1292 A.D. The chief source of information is *T'oung Pao*, XV, pp. 430-44 (W. W. Rockhill). We shall summarise briefly the information recorded therein. In 1279, there arrived from Ma'bar and Annam a mission which presented the emperor with a live elephant and a rhinoceros. This stimulated Kublai Khan to send a trusted lieutenant of his to further negotiate with the Pāṇḍyan king and induce him to accept him as his overlord and make him send an envoy in recognition of the fact. The envoy sent by the Chinese Emperor was Yang Ting-pi, then holding the office of Imperial Commissioner.

As luck would have it, a missian arrived at the court of China in 1280 from Ma'bar with a memorial from the Pāṇḍyan king, the latter styling himself 'your servant'. Valuable articles were presented as tribute. The leader of this delegation is named Jumaluddin. It was all the more pleasing to the Emperor who had despatched Yang Ting-pi to effect the very same purpose. It was a voluntary embassy sent by the Pāṇḍyan king long before the arrival of the special envoy of the Chinese emperor. The object of the memorial was a request to the emperor to lend the services of the Mongols against the local enemies who were harassing him day in and day out.

Yang Ting-pi's work was easy. The recognition of Kublai had already been effected. He returned to China. Soon he was ordered to proceed to Quilon and the adjacent countries with a view to invite them also to the Chinese court. The delegates of this mission went by their junk and landed at the port of Hsin-Tsun, identified with Kāverīpaṭṭanam. They had a warm reception

given by the Minister of State helped by his secretary. Before they started for Quilon, a secret message was placed in the hands of the delegation. It is possibly the message of Kulaśekhara to the Chinese Emperor accepting the rank of a feudal prince to the Chinese Empire and soliciting assistance against Suan-Tan evidently Sundara Pāṇḍya who had deprived him of all his wealth and even his wives. This confidential document was taken by one of the leading members of the delegation to China to appraise the emperor of the real state of affairs in Ma'bar. And Yang Ting-pi left for Quilon under further instructions.

At Quilon the imperial letter was presented to the authorities in 1282. The prominent leaders of the different communities—Christians, Muslims and others agreed in acceding to the request of the Chinese Emperor and promised annual presents to the court. A representative of them was also sent to have audience with the Emperor. The kingdom of Su-mu-ta followed suit. This is still left unidentified. Rokhill's suggestion that it may be Mangalore or near about is rather vague.

After a successful mission, Yang Ting-pi set his mind on the return journey in the same year 1282. He passed the kingdom of Na-wang which again is unidentified and then Sumatra whose ruler accepted allegiance to the Emperor. On his return Yang Ting-pi found the representatives of countries visited by him calling on the Emperor with their presents. He was the recipient of several royal honours. From this year the missions from South India and the islands of the Archipelago were more and more frequent. In 1283 and early in 1284 the king of Ma'bar sent a mission with presents which included pearls, rare jewels and light silks.

Kublai was a man of ambition. He wanted to collect as much precious products as possible. He wanted also strange birds and beasts. He was anxious to get magicians and physicians from other countries. So he continued now and then sending one mission after another. In 1285, we are told, he despatched an embassy once again to Ma'bar to procure rare and precious things as far as possible. In 1288, skilled physicians with drugs arrived at the court of China from Ma'bar. The largest mission that had ever arrived at the Chinese court was in 1286 when representatives of ten states visited the court. The representatives were generally the sons or younger brothers of the reigning king. Among these ten states were Ma'bar, Mangalore, Cranganore, Manifattan (port on the Coro-

mandal coast), and Nellore. All of them came with letters from the ruling princes and memorials. In fact the embassy from Ma'bar became annual. For the Chinese sources testify to a mission in 1288, 1289 and 1290. Zebras, oxen and buffalo were among other presents. The emperor's thirst for South Indians and their products grew more and more. He was enamoured of South Indians learned in sciences, interpreters of different languages, skilled workmen, soldiers and sailors and last but not the least jugglers. Imbued by such a passion, Kublai sent a mission in 1290 to search for these and bring them to the imperial court. A similar mission was sent also in the succeeding year. In 1296 again the Emperor sent yet another mission to Ma'bar and perhaps also in 1297. Proceeding further we hear of a mission from Ma'bar in 1314. Thirty years after in 1344, it is mentioned an envoy was despatched to Quilon.

According to the Ming Shi records quoted in Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches*, Volume I, p. 211 (Kegan Paul, 1910) the last embassy that was sent from Vijayanagar was in 1374 by Bu-ha-lu of Bukka I. The Vijayanagar envoy whose name is mentioned as Bi-ni-si, still unidentified, started from Anegundi. From the records, it is seen that Bukka I sent his 'chief explainer' (Kiang-Chu) as the envoy, with tribute to the Emperor of China. No definite information is given regarding the purpose of the mission. Among other things, the envoy presented to the Emperor a stone which had the property of neutralising poison. (*Ind. Ant.* 1916. p. 140). We no more hear of official relations between China and Southern India but trade relations were kept up 'though of much less volume and value.'

Culture Contacts :

With the opening of trade and trade routes, the Buddhist missionaries of India were encouraged to make adventurous attempts to leave Indian shores and to spread their faith in distant lands. Central Asia and China welcomed these missionaries and began to adopt slowly their faith. In the first century A.D. we hear Dharmarakṣa and Kāśyapa Mātuṅga going to China, the establishment of the White Horse Monastery, and the enthusiasm of the elite of the Chinese capital in embracing the new religion.

The religion introduced in China was what is known as the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism as distinct from the Hīnayāna, which form

was more popular in South India and Ceylon. The Mahayana which is a later development of Buddhism in India became the dominant religion of China and continued to be so to the present day. It aimed at uplifting the whole of mankind to salvation. Monastic life was the chief institution of this form of religion. Soon China became studded with monasteries, wedded to the practice of dharma taught by the Buddha or the Light of World. A number of Mahayanistic classical sūtras were put down in writing in Chinese soil, based on Aśvaghoṣa and Nagarjuna. When the movement gained momentum there was an urge on the part of the zealous Chinese missionaries to set out on pilgrimage to India and study the religion in the land of its birth. Some of these missionaries travelled all the way down to South India and Ceylon and were strongly impressed with the Hinayana form of Buddhism. But still the Mahayana dominated in China.

While this was the case in the early centuries of the Christian Era, the trade and political contacts of China with South India carried in its wake missionaries from South India to China and *vice-versa*. We have little or no records detailing the activities of religious missions in the early period. One thing is certain. With the spread of Indian civilisation in the Far East, which was the passage of South Indians to distant China by sea, the same civilisation spread gradually to China, especially to South China. The first definite land-mark in the history of South India's contribution to the Chinese Buddhism is set by the arrival of the South Indian monk Bodhidharma in the year 520 A.D. in China. As has been happily put*, the coming of Bodhidharma is significant from more than one point. Bodhidharma was the twentyeighth patriarch in direct line from Śākyamuni Buddha. When he left India and settled in China, the centre of gravity was moved actually from India to China. Then China and not India, became the centre of Buddhism. So Bodhidharma has been called India's last patriarch and China's first patriarch. He has been regarded as the third son of an Indian king, probably King of Kanchi. He went to Indonesia where he was initiated into the Dhyāna School of Buddhism. He reached China by sea. He was accorded royal welcome by the Emperor Liang Wu in Nanking. The Chinese accounts have preserved the conversation

*K. L. Reichelt: *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism* (1927) pp. 45-6.

that took place between the Emperor and Bodhidharma. (See Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 108 ff.). The Emperor began by saying that since his accession to the throne, he was erecting temples, transcribing sacred books and encouraging new monks. The reply of Bodhidharma was that no merit was accumulated by such acts. For it was all shadow and no substance. Asked by the Emperor wherein consisted true merit, the patriarch replied that it consisted in purity and enlightenment,to be attained through practice of meditation and that as such could not be sought by worldly means. It may be remembered that Bodhidharma was simply voicing forth the pronounced views of the Great Nagarjuna. Soon the patriarch went to North China, then under the Wei rulers. In Song-Shan, in a monastery, he was leading a retired life.

As was wont with saints of his stamp, a number of miracles are attributed to him. Once he had to cross the Blue River when he plucked a reed which served him as a raft. Other miracles of an unhistorical character need not deter us. It is said that he appreciated the monastery of *Yong ning sse*, built in 516 at Loyang. Tradition credits him with 150 years of age.

What is important to us is his contribution to Chinese Buddhism. He was known as Ta-mo in Chinese and as Daruma in Japanese. His activity was not confined to China. It spread to Japan also. He established the Meditation School which lay special emphasis on the contemplative aspect of Mahayana, which Nagarjuna wrote, preached and taught. Bodhidharma had in Hui-si and Chi-kai two disciples who propagated the views of their master, though in a modified form. The Meditation School otherwise known as the Zen School, soon merged other schools of thought into itself and became a force in the religious life of China. The teaching of this school is happily put in the words of Ma-Tsu, a pupil of Bodhidharma. He said 'O! Monks, when you each believe that you yourself are the Buddha, your mind is no other than the Buddha's mind. The object of Bodhidharma who came from Southern India to this Middle Kingdom was to personally transmit and propagate the supreme law of one mind by which we are all to be awakened to the truth' (Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism and Studies*, p. 46). Bodhidharma himself became so much venerated that portraits representing him as a bearded person with twig on his shoulder from which hang one of his sandals are found commonly in both China and Japan. China knew of only six patriarchs.

The remaining five succeeded as master and pupil. Their images were installed in all big monasteries and their birthdays celebrated.

The next notable figure of South India who visited China was Bodhiruci. It is said that as early as when he was twelve years old, he left his parents and received instructions from a Brahmanical school. After specialising in the Brahmanical sciences, he took part in the public debates with students of other schools. It so happened that he had to meet one Buddhist scholar, Yaśaghoṣa by name. In the course of a discussion, he found in Yaśaghoṣa an erudite scholar, deeply versed in the subject. Attracted by his learning he embraced Buddhist faith and became his disciple. Thenceforward, he took to a close study of Buddhist books and soon became a renowned Buddhist teacher. In fact his name was so well known that a Chinese envoy who was at that time in the Chalukyan court (692 A.D.) invited Bodhiruci to go to China and aid the Chinese Buddhists. The invitation was readily accepted. He took the sea route and reached China in 693. Immediately he took to translating Buddhist Sanskrit texts into Chinese. It was no easy task and in carrying it out, he was helped by a group of Chinese scholars. It is said that one group of scholars noted down the translation. Another group touched up the language and saw that it was done in proper literary style. A third group compared notes with the original and saw that the translation was a faithful rendering of the original. Thus helped by a band of scholars, Bodhiruci was able to produce a good literature for the satisfaction of the Chinese literati.

After twelve years of strenuous literary work, Bodhiruci called on the Emperor at his capital in 706. Here he made the monastery of Si-chong-fu as his residence. During his sojourn at the capital he took up another important work to be rendered into Chinese. This was the *Ratnakūṭa*. It was one of the works on Mahayana, dealing extensively with the tenets of the Mahayana. The original manuscript of the *Ratnakūṭa* was taken from India by the well-known Chinese pilgrim Hiuang-Tsang. It was the latter's ambition to translate it himself. But before he could proceed, he was snatched away by death. When Bodhiruci heard of this, he volunteered to do it and in seven years, i.e., by 713, he was able to finish the work. We are told by the Chinese biographer that the Emperor was so much interested in this great work of translation of the *Katnakūṭa* that he himself sat down and wrote notes with

his hand when the translation was done. We are led to believe that there was a regular court held when Bodhiruci was dictating the translation. The queen and others of the Emperor's harem, and the chief officials of the state were present on most days when the translation was going on. As it was one of the extensive and difficult works, Bodhiruci invoked also the assistance of Indian monks then in the court of China. Among them were one Iśvara of Eastern India, one Dharma and another Prajñāgupta of South India. The total number of volumes rendered into the Chinese by Bodhiruci was fiftythree, surely more than a life's work of an ordinary individual. Then he retired and passed the evening of his life in contemplation or Dhyana. The biographer tells us that in 724 he went to Loyang along with the Emperor. Three years later he attained Nirvāṇa. In his last days he knew his end was approaching. Then he gave up eating and spent fifty-five days in fasting in an atmosphere of all peace and quiet. The biographer puts down his age as 156 at the time of his death. Whether we believe it or not, it is irrefutable that he lived a pretty long life.

About Prajñāgupta we know very little. All that we know is that he was a South Indian monk and a contemporary of Bodhiruci whom he assisted in the translation of the *Ratnakūṭa.*

We may also refer to one other monk who was not actually a South Indian by birth but was connected with the royal court of the Pallavas. This was Vijrabodhi, a son of Iśānavarman of Central India (Bagchi *op. cit.*, p. 59). He prosecuted his studies at the University of Nalanda and spent some years at Kanchi in the court of Pallava king Narasiṁha Potavarman. Then he went to Ceylon where he joined a mission organised by the King of Ceylon to visit China. The object of this mission was to present the Chinese emperor with a copy of *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-Sūtra* and other records of value. It is said that Vijrabodhi arrived at Canton in 720 A.D. He won the regard and respect of Chinese monks and of Indian monks settled in China. One Indian monk Amoghavajra who belonged to a Brahman family settled in Ceylon volunteered to be his disciple. For seven years from 723 to 730 Vajrabodhi rendered translations in Chinese of Buddhist mystic works. These appealed both to the laymen and monks. He met with his death in 732 A.D. at Loyang.

We also hear of one Bodhisena, a South Indian Brahmin who

was an ardent admirer of the great Mañjuśrī, one of the famous Bodhisattvas, who was reported to be living in China. Bodhisena resolved to meet him and left for China. At Champa he was joined by Buttetsu who was equally interested in meeting Mañjuśrī. Both travelled together and reached China in 733. Having heard there that Mañjuśrī had gone to Japan, Bodhisena and his friend joined a Japanese embassy to Japan. It is said that Bodhisena who was much honoured in Japan was elected in 750 as Sojo, the Head of the entire Buddhist church in Japan.*

Though Indian monks were frequenting the Chinese capitals upto 1036, still among the names of prominent men, we search in vain for monks who went out from South India. People of Western India and Central India figure very much in the list. There are one or two from Ceylon. It was the period of the decline of the Pallavas and the rise of Cholas to power who were ardent patrons of the established religion of the land. It was also the period when Buddhism had completely disappeared from South Indian soil possibly due to the propaganda carried out indiscriminately by the Saiva and Vaishnava saints for nearly five centuries. Another reason for the dearth of missionary enterprise may be the fact that China enthroned as it were the Mahayana form of Buddhism from beginning to end, and that the Hinayana never appealed to them. Last but not the least was the new spirit in China. In 845 A.D. the emperor Wu Tsung ordered that 4,600 convents and 40,000 religious buildings be pulled down in the empire. The monks and nuns were forced to take to secular life. From this date begins the decline of the Buddhist church in China. But the profound influence which was made on the people in general could not be cured by a fiat of the emperor. So there were laymen who still adhered to the broad views of the Mahayana church. To escape persecution at the hands of the state, various 'secret societies' and sects came into being. They still preserve many elements of Buddhism which have left an indelible mark in their minds and which have brought India and China in closer contact for more than ten centuries.

We have been examining all along the Indian missionaries who had been visiting China from time to time. It is a reasonable question now to ask whether there was a similar response on the

*See K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices etc*, Introd., pp. 18-19.

part of China and whether any of her pilgrims came to India with a view to study Buddhism here. The answer is certainly in the affirmative. But still the fact remains that several of them confined their activities to North India and a few only passed southward. Even here an enthusiastic pilgrim Fa-Hien who travelled at the commencement of the fifth century A.D. did not visit the mainland of South India. From Tamluk he went straight to Ceylon and from there he took the sea route to China.

The next pilgrim of any importance from China to India was Hiuan-tsang. He travelled widely from the north to the South visiting places chiefly of Buddhist interest. He has left an interesting record of his travels in India. Though we cannot accept all his statements, still there is much material in them which could be used for historical purposes. His records leave one with the impression that he was not a bigoted Buddhist. As Watters puts it nicely "his creed was broad and his piety never became ascetic and he was by nature tolerant". Beal's *Buddhist Records of the Western World* (II, 204-60) contains an account of Hiuan-tsang's impressions of the places which he visited in South India such as Kaliṅga, Andhra, Chola, Drāviḍa, Pāṇḍya and Koṅkaṇa,

From Hiuan-tsang we gather information as to the erection of Srī Parvata Monastery referred to also by Fa-Hien. It is said that famous teacher and author Nagarjuna spent the last years of his life here. It finds mention in the Prakrit inscription from Nagarjunikonda (*Ep. Indica*, XX. pp. 9, 22). Hiuan-tsang refers to twenty different monasteries in the Andhradeśa. He also refers to about 100 deva-temples which means shrines devoted to Hindu faith. Reference is also made to the Monasteries Pūrvaśaila and Aparaśaila lying to the east and west of the capital city, at a hill. By Drāviḍa Hiuan-tsang seems to locate Kanchi where he testified to the existence of Hindu and Jain temples. The capital was reported to be the birth-place of Dharmapāla who became convert to the Buddhist faith and erected a monastery near the place of his residence. The Chinese pilgrim draws our attention to some Aśoka Topes here as well as in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom.

Though all this is of interest to students of South Indian history, yet we have to assess what was the contribution of Hiuan-tsang as a result of his visit to India to Chinese Buddhism. When he returned to China, he was welcomed by the emperor and the public with great eclat. During his travels in India Hiuan-tsang collected

a number of valuable manuscripts on Buddhism and took them to China on his return. He was himself a good Sanskrit scholar and was specially interested in Yogācāra or Vijñānavāda. He started in China a Vijñānavāda school and himself translated all the important works relating to Vijñāna. The chief doctrine of this school was that Vijñāna was the only reality. He also started another school known as Sarvāstivāda school of the lesser Vehicle. Thus Hiuan-tsang did substantial work for the progress of Chinese studies in Buddhism. The one great service Chinese Buddhism did was giving publicity to all the works of Nāgārjuna who founded what is known as the Mādhyamika system. All the works of Nāgārjuna are preserved in Chinese. But most valuable is the preservation of *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra Śāstra* in Chinese translation, original of which is completely lost to us.

The next pilgrim who visited India and left itinerary notices of the different practices of Buddhism in the different places was Yi-tsing. But unfortunately he did not visit either South India or Ceylon. E. Chavannes records six pilgrims of Yi-tsing's days who visited South India and Ceylon. The first was Mingyuan who arrived in Ceylon and managed to steal the tooth of the Buddha. He was subsequently found out much to his shame. He also visited South India (*Religieux Eminents*, pp. 54-6). The second was Yi-lang who sailed for Ceylon and worshipped the tooth of the Buddha there. Nothing was heard of him afterwards. (*op. cit.*, pp. 58-9). The third was Ta-tcheng-ten (this is a translation of his Sanskrit name Mahāyānapradīpa) who also adored the foot of the Buddha in Ceylon and came to South India on his way to Tāmralipti (*op. cit.* pp. 72). The fourth pilgrim was Tao-lin who went to South India and studied the system prevalent there (*op. cit.* 99-101). The fifth pilgrim Hiuan-yu is said to have embarked for Ceylon. He did not appear to have visited South India (*op. cit.* pp. 133). The sixth was Wu-hing. After visiting a number of places he finally came to Nāgapatana and after two days on the sea, he arrived in Ceylon and worshipped the tooth of the Buddha (*op. cit.* pp. 135-6).

There is evidence to show hundreds of pilgrims continued to visit India and also South India, I suppose, but there are no details either of the names of persons or the works done by them, which would be helpful to a historian. Therefore we must be content

by concluding that there were other pilgrims whose activities we are not able to trace in the absence of any reliable meterial. It is also legitimate to point out that with a sort of official crusade against Buddhism and Buddhists in China, Buddhism as a religious force began to decline from the ninth century onwards. But the actual downfall was to come much later. Kublai Khan patronised the Buddhist church. Wu Tsung (1308-12) a ruling prince did much to this church. From the time of his successor the downfall of the church became an established fact. But our consolation is that even to-day it is not dead.

The cultural relations were not merely cofined to religion and religious intercourse. They were felt in other fields of activity as well. I shall now proceed to examine them.

Porcelain use in Music:

In the field of fine arts, especially in South Indian music, Chinese influence is markedly felt. Among the musical instruments of South India, *Jalataraṅgam,* literally meaning 'water waves' is one. It consists of resonant porcelain cups, arranged in a semi-circle in front of the performer. It is capable of producing very high speed, Tremolo effects are produced by the two hands striking the same cup alternately. This is manipulated by a wooden sphere which is provided with a handle. The performer strikes at the outset the cup whose note is to be graced, dipping at the same time the wooden sphere into the water and lifting it up. This process is continued for a number of times. It is an artificial way of altering the water-level resulting in the requisite increase and decrease of pitch.

What we are concerned here is the use of the porcelain cups in this performance. *Jalataraṅgam* is an ancient performance. Before the introduction of porcelain cups, metallic cups were used. After the introduction of porcelain in South India, the metallic pieces were replaced by porcelain cups. This is certainly due to the contact of China, which country alone specialised in porcelain. It is difficult to determine the date when porcelain replaced the metallic cups in South India (See P. Sambamurti: *Bulletin of the Madras Museum*: South Indian Musical Instruments). But best porcelain was produced in China between 960-1280 A.D. It is said that this art was perfected there in the tenth century, and was aided and improved by Indian workmen who came along with the

Buddhist priests (J. Dyer Ball, *Things Chinese*, London, 1926, pp. 504, 517). It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the use of porcelain in South India must be about 12th century and after.

Architecture·

In architecture, South India seems to have influenced China to a considerable extent. Sulayman tells us that the walls of the Chinese buildings were of wood. At the same time he credits the people of Hind with a profound knowledge of stone, plaster, and bricks as the materials used in their buildings. From what Sulayman says we have to infer that the Chinese later on gave up their wooden structure and began to build solid ones after the South Indian fashion. It is further stated that the Chinese believe that the people of Hind erected idols for them and regard them as a people of religion. Both the people of China and Hind say that their idols speak to them.* This evidences the fact that the influence of South India was not confined only to the field of architecture but it extended to sculpture and the science of iconography in China. We have evidence of our workmen being requisitioned in large numbers for such services.

Science:

If Sulayman's authority could be trusted, China owed to India not only to her religion but also to a knowledge of science. Another Arab writer, Abu Zayd, seems to confirm the indebtedness of the Chinese to India for science. Abu Zayd relates the story of an Arab who went to China and had an interview with the Chinese Emperor. In the course of their conversation, the Emperor spoke of the King of Hind as the King of Elephants and added that the Chinese regard him as the King of Wisdom for the origin of science is from Hind. Though we are not in a position to identify this king who was probably a South Indian monarch, still it shows that China magnificently acknowledged what she owed to India and especially South India.

The recent revival in the cultural understanding between the two great peoples—Indians and Chinese, will, it is hoped, once more lead to frequent cultural contacts and bring back the two ancient nations much closer and make them mutually helpful.

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Printed and published by J. C. Sarkhel at the Calcutta Oriental Press, Ltd.
9, Panchanan Ghose Lane, Calcutta.